

the argument for corporate support

Companies today face a tough competitive environment. Coupled with a growing expectation from consumers that they should demonstrate good corporate citizenship, companies are seeking opportunities to partner with credible and high profile charities to enhance their position within the marketplace.

Aligning with the right cause is not only a reflection of corporate values; it also provides strategic benefits to differentiate an organisation from competitors. There is little doubt that corporations that demonstrate social responsibility improve their reputation in addition to motivating and retaining their employees.

the facts (and some figures)

- 80% of Australians agree that companies have major community responsibility (Australian SCAN, 1999);
- 65% agree that companies weren't living up to their responsibilities very well (Australian SCAN, 1999);
- 77% of consumers would prefer to purchase a product associated with a cause, and 54% would be willing to switch from their normal brand (when products are similar in terms of price and quality)*;
- More than one third of consumers were influenced to buy a company's products or services in the last year because of its association with a charitable or community cause*;
- The number of consumers influenced to buy products or services because of a company's association with a cause has almost doubled in four years (from 19% in 1997 to 34% in 2001)*;
- Staff rate a company's 'reputation' as their second priority (behind career growth potential) in choosing an employer (Cone/Roper 1999);
- 9 in 10 workers whose companies have a cause program feel proud of their company's values, versus 5 in 10 of those whose employers are not committed to a cause (Cone/Roper 1999).

These figures indicate there is a growing trend and expectation that not only should companies be good corporate citizens, but Australian consumers are willing to support those companies who are.

supporting a charity makes good business sense

Research indicates that the top three causes consumers would like to see Australian companies support are:

- medical research for diseases like cancer and leukaemia;
- health or medical care for children;
- child protection*

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